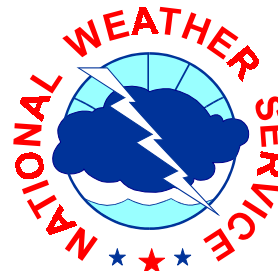


**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**



DECEMBER 18, 2001

The Western Region Headquarter's staff wishes you a joyous holiday season and a happy new year.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

The MIC Workshop was held last week (December 11-13) in Tucson, Arizona. The MICs addressed the National Digital Forecast Database (NDFD) and Interactive Forecast Preparation System (IFPS), the Rapid Prototype Project (RPP) and lessons learned, and development of a new operational concept. Teamwork was essential in developing ideas for a new operational concept. Tucson's weather was a little out of character with rain two consecutive days and the second lowest temperature in 12 years. The weather didn't deter the presentation of two Unit Citations, one for WFO Glasgow and one for WFO Billings. Both offices performed exemplary in participating in the national Watch County Notification (WCN) test during their severe weather outbreak. Good work Glasgow and Billings!

DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR

On December 17 and 18, I visited the office at Billings to present two Coop awards. The first award was the Ben Franklin Award which is for 55 years of service. Mr. Elmer Gee, who just turned 84, has been taking observations at the same location in Rapelje, Montana since December of 1946, and he plans to keep going. The entire town turned out for the ceremony. It always amazes me to see the kind of dedication the cooperative observers have, especially since they get little or no pay, only the pride of doing a good job and contributing to the Nation's climate program. We also gave out a 50-year Institutional Award to the water company in Billings. Thanks to everyone at Billings for supporting the CPM program, and a special thanks to Danny Graves for his efforts in operating a first class program.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

STATEMENT OF THE WEEK: An active weather pattern developed over WR around Thanksgiving. A series of significant storms pushed inland the week following Thanksgiving with damaging winds and copious precipitation across much of the northern half of the region.

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Marilyn Lohmann and Dennis Hull at WFO Pendleton produced the Blizzard Warning product below. Blizzard Warnings have been rarely issued in WR in recent winters. They are intended to highlight life threatening winter conditions. Marilyn and Dennis' warning was chosen for Statement of the Week this week for concisely informing customers what the weather conditions will be and for stating frankly that venturing outside in those conditions may be deadly.

WWWWWUS46 KPDT 281904
WSWPDT

URGENT - WINTER WEATHER MESSAGE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PENDLETON OR
1100 AM PST WED NOV 28 2001

ORZ046-049-050-WAZ030-290200-
BLUE MOUNTAIN OF OREGON OR-GRANDE RONDE VALLEY OR-NORTHWEST BLUE
INCLUDING THE CITIES OF...ENTERPRISE AND LA GRANDE
1100 AM PST WED NOV 28 2001

...BLIZZARD WARNING THROUGH THIS AFTERNOON...

WINDS 40 TO 50 MPH WITH GUSTS 60 TO 70 MPH WILL CONTINUE OVER THE BLUE MOUNTAINS...THE GRANDE RONDE VALLEY AND WALLOWA COUNTY. THESE WINDS COMBINED WITH SNOW WILL CREATE NEAR WHITEOUT CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITIES LESS THAN 1/4 MILE. IN ADDITION...WIND CHILL TEMPERATURES WILL BE NEAR ZERO DEGREES.

TRAVEL IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED WITH MANY ROADS CLOSED. IF YOU LEAVE THE SAFETY OF BEING INDOORS, YOU ARE PUTTING YOUR LIFE AT RISK.

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Marilyn Lohmann/Dennis Hull

Short Fuse Warning Data Basing: WSH Performance Branch proposed two changes to data basing short fuse (i.e., county-based) warnings. The proposed changes were sent to the Regions and WFOs in late October and were to take effect January 1. Regional MSDs agreed to accept one data basing change (so called "Rule 1") having to do with strict adherence to the information contained in the mass news dissemination header block. The regions opposed the second proposed change ("Rule 2") which governed procedures for when multiple warnings for one county are in effect simultaneously. A conference call was held December 5 between the regions and WSH. It was determined Rule 2 was originally proposed to help the Performance Branch track corrected warnings. The impact the change would have on simultaneous warnings, which includes potential lower POD and lead time, was unintended. The regions will distribute

specific instructions to WFOs on how corrections to short fuse warnings MUST be done. A secondary activity will be to address Warngen requirements for improved QC, including methods that have been formally submitted but not yet implemented.

Marine Professional Development Series: Producers working on the Marine PDS training modules held a conference call December 10 to discuss goals and activities for 2002. Another call is scheduled for December 17. Topics focused on the status of material development, improved ways to share materials for other PDS team members to review, and presenting new PDS materials at established regional marine training workshops. Tom Ainsworth, WR MSD, is the Executive Producer for the Marine PDS.

HYDROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Western Region RFC Meeting: The HICs and DOHs (except for Don Laurine who stayed in Portland due to potential high water) from the three Western Region RFCs met with the Hydrologic Services Division on Wednesday, December 4 through Friday, December 6. The purpose of the meeting was to share ideas, approaches, and goals regarding RFC programs. Among the topics covered were dam failure procedures, RFC verification, AHPS, and Flash Flood guidance. After briefly covering the status of these programs, the group focused on discussions of methods to utilize procedures from each others offices and direction and approaches to improve on services in these areas. The group was also briefed on the WR IFPS implementation, the role of the WFO Information Technology Officer, and the corporate web page program.

Precipitation Frequencies rasters available on-line: NOAA Atlas 2 rasters can be downloaded at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/oh/hdsc/noaaatlas2.htm>.

This includes grids of 2-year 6-hour, 2- year 24-hour, 100-year 6-hour and 100-year 24-hour precipitation frequency . You can also get this information interactively for a specified point by entering latitude and longitude.

CLIMATE SERVICES

Climate Information Web Page: This is just a reminder that the WR climate Website (internal) is constantly updated with new information. This is a great site to find general climate topics and explanations, information about current and seasonal issues, and links to climate related products and services. Please check this site periodically for the latest climate information. For those who have this page bookmarked, please note that the address has been changed slightly, and can now be found at:

http://ww2.wrh.noaa.gov/climate_info/index.htm

New 1971-2000 Climate Normals: After a few unforeseen problems, MDL has provided new instructions for retrieving the 1971-2000 Climate Normals and entering them into the AWIPS. These instructions were sent to all MICs on Friday, December 14, 2001, via email. Please remember the switchover will occur on January 1, 2002. If there should be any problems/questions regarding NCDC's new Climate Normals or the AWIPS instructions, please contact the following individuals:

For questions regarding the AWIPS programs and instructions, please contact Bob Morris (robert.morris@noaa.gov) at (301)713-0056 ext. 110.

Questions regarding the climate data should be addressed to NCDC via Tim Owen (time.owen@noaa.gov) at (828)271-4453.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

NWS/COMET Outreach Program 2002 Request for Proposals: The Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education and Training (COMET) announces its 2001 Outreach Program Request for Proposals (RFP) for National Weather Service (NWS) Cooperative Projects. A description of the projects and the proposal submission requirements can be found on the Web at:

<http://www.comet.ucar.edu/outreach/coop.htm>

If you are unable to access the Web and would like a hard copy of the RFP, please contact Bonnie Slagel at bonnie@comet.ucar.edu and one will be sent to you. The first drafts of the NWS Cooperative proposals are due to the appropriate NWS region by January 22, 2002, with the final version submitted to the Outreach Program on March 15, 2002.

Applications for the smaller COMET Partners Projects are accepted at any time. Information about how to submit a proposal for a Partners Project is available from the Outreach Program Web site at:

<http://www.comet.ucar.edu/outreach/part.htm>

Western Region (WR) Weather Event Simulator Implementation and Operations Policy - The WR Weather Event Simulator (WES) Implementation and Operations Policy was emailed to all offices on December 7, 2001. It is available on the WR Intranet page at:

<http://ww2.wrh.noaa.gov/ssd/wes.htm>

The first due date is January 15, 2002, when the WES needs to be set up and have local archiving working. Please report on the

status of all deadlines to Kevin Schrab, WR-SSD, the WR WES coordinator.

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

COOP: The Historical Climatology Network (HCN) station listing now available. A column is now located on your COOP station listing indicating if a station belongs to this vital network. Your station listing is located on the COOP and Surface Observing Program regional web page.

AWIPS Upgrades: The urgent maintenance release 5.1.1.2 software bundle was sent to four beta test sites for them to install. Beta testing should be completed by COB Thursday, December 13, 2001. If successful, the release will then be distributed to all sites. The release includes two patches, one that affects pane swapping and the other affects IFPS.

Release 5.1.2 is ready for installation. Greg Wallace, WRH/SIB, will coordinate the scheduling of the upgrade with each office. The NCF will handle 5 sites per day beginning January 7, 2002. This upgrade takes around 6 to 9 hours.

Linux workstation test sites and NDFD test sites running Release 5.1.1.1 need to wait until a problem with spontaneous logouts is solved before upgrading to 5.1.2. Sites that have not yet received AWIPS Linux workstations need to install Release 5.1.2 before they can install the new Linux workstations. However, the installation of the new Linux workstations will also have to wait until the spontaneous logout problem is solved.

Radiosonde Replacement System: Jack Kelly was briefed on the 10th of December of the plan to proceed with the GPS radiosonde pre-production contracts. According to this plan, we will award pre-production contracts on 1 March 2002 with deliveries beginning six months later. The initial 100 or so pre-production sondes will be used to verify sonde specification compliance. Then we go into the test and integration phase, and soon after, deployment.

Unfortunately, this plan involves a six month slip in the Tracking Replacement System (TRS) deployment (to June 2003) due primarily to the need to conduct qualification testing on the pre-production sondes. This slip, however, provides time to complete maintenance manuals, user's guides, training course development, training, etc. and ensure proper logistics is in place to support deployment.

ASOS: Ice Accretion: Software version 2.62I was installed Monday, December 10, at Pendleton (PDT), OR, and Springfield (SGF), MO, for an initial test of stability. The test will run through December 12, when a decision to implement at the remaining Operational Assessment Test (OAT) sites will be made. Yakima (YKM), WA, is the other Western Region OAT site.

Processor Upgrade: The ADAS communication problem is not going to be worked on until the new year because PRISM, the company working on the software upgrade, has been tasked to work on the software to support the dewpoint replacement sensor. As a result, the processor upgrade will not be installed at any more ASOSs, including Boise (BOI), ID, until the new year.

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New databases: Two new databases containing transmit times, and which LDAD systems each NWS communicating ASOS dials into, are now on the Western Region Website at:

<http://ww2.wrh.noaa.gov/sod/elec/AsosPaceOffice.htm> and at
<http://ww2.wrh.noaa.gov/sod/elec/AsosPaceTimes.htm>.

The next Open Radar Product Generator (ORPG): Installations will occur the week of December 17, 2001, at Tucson and Las Vegas.